Realism and Idealism in Art Sculptures

Target Group: Grades 9-12

Goal (Terminal Objective): Students will create sculptures demonstrating their understanding of realism and idealism in art and culture.

Objective: Each student will design and sculpt an idealized image of a generic high school student, exaggerating physical characteristics that emphasize the character strengths of the model.

National Standards:
Visual Arts Grades 9-12 Content Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
Visual Arts Grades 9-12 Content Standard 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas
Visual Arts Grades 9-12 Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
Visual Arts Grades 9-12 Content Standard 5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

Purpose: Students will explore the concepts of realism and idealism in art and culture, how distortions and exaggerations emphasize perceived traits, sometimes to the point of stereotype, while attention to realistic detail tends to emphasize individuality.

Materials:

#22-2003 Sculpt-It! White Re-sealable Tub

#24-2499 16 oz. 12 pcs. Acrylic Paint

#56-6010 & #56-6012 Natural Hair Rainbow Brush Assortments

#22-1560 8 ct. Washable Fine Tip Peggable Carton Markers

#22-7244 144 ct. Graphite Pencils

#22-9111 11 ct. Sculpting Tool Set

Paper, historical art prints, Small Sculpture Tools.

New Vocabulary: Idealism, Realism, Stereotype

Time: This lesson may be modified to last from one to three hours, depending upon size and complexity expectations.

Introduction and Motivation (Set): Students will view exemplars of sculptures from Ancient Greece and Rome.

Teacher introduces the concepts of Idealism in the culture of Ancient Greece and how "the Greek Ideal" is represented in Greek figure sculpture as represented by the historical

exemplars. Teacher introduces the concepts of Realism in the culture of Ancient Rome and how Rome's respect for individuality is represented by the Roman sculptures in the historical exemplars.

Teacher initiates a discussion about examples of Realism and Idealism in contemporary American media. In what ways do Americans value idealized images of people and in what ways do Americans value images of people as they really are?
Teacher presents the term "stereotype", constructing a definition from student input. How do stereotypes relate to the concepts of Realism and Idealism?

Instruction: Teacher asks students to think of the population of their school. Do students talk about "types' within the student body? Are there students who stand out for their individuality? Are the terms "nerds," "jocks," "ditzes," "emos," "hoosiers," "punks," "goody-goodies," "greasers," "Goths," "band geeks," etc. ever heard in school? What stereotypical appearances do these terms bring to mind? Suggest that it might be difficult to think of an ACTUAL individual student who embodies all of the characteristics of the stereotype without sharing some traits with other students. Stereotypes are ideal forms that sacrifice individuality and realism.

Teacher organizes the classroom to facilitate students' easy, orderly access to materials.

Activities:
(1) Guided Practice:
        1. Students create thumbnail sketches of five "types" of high school students.

        2. Students select the most promising image with the help of the teacher. Student visualizes and draws three views of the chosen stereotypical character (front, side, rear). The teacher may select student models to take turns posing in order to facilitate this step.

        3. Using Sargent Sculpt-It, students model a figurine of their stereotypical character. A section of coat-hanger wire may be inserted to add support. Completed figures should be detailed and 4-6 inches tall. Allow sculptures to air dry.

        4. Students use Sargent paints to add color to the finished figures.   It may be

noted that The Greeks and Romans also painted their finished marble sculptures.

Allow sculptures to air dry.
5. Clean up with soap and water.

<u>(2)</u> <u>Independent Practice and Check for Understanding:</u> Teacher circulates among the working students visually recording (checklist) students demonstrating understanding of objectives, asking direct questions when understanding isn't observable, asking peers to critique each other. Teacher helps and reinforces students as they work.

<u>(3)</u> <u>Closure</u>**:** Students may display all the sculptures from the class in one large group display (perhaps a class picture or a parade). Discussion should focus on successful examples of student work that conveys the "ideal" of a particular stereotype and that **<u>none</u>** of the sculptures (hopefully) looks like a particular "real" individual person.

<u>Evaluation</u>: Finished, dry sculptures may be displayed in the classroom. Use teacher or class critiques to evaluate particularly strong works and strong qualities within works.

Level One -- The finished sculpture clearly expresses an ideal form in three dimensions. The sculpture is highly detailed and carefully modeled and carved. The student used color appropriately and creatively to enhance the idealized imagery. The finished sculpture measures between four and six inches. Craftsmanship is excellent.

Level Two -- The finished sculpture expresses an ideal form in three dimensions. The sculpture has some interesting details, and is appropriately modeled and carved. The student used color carefully. The finished sculpture measures about four to six inches. Craftsmanship is good.

Level Three -- The finished sculpture demonstrates the intention to express an ideal form in three dimensions, but with limited success. Details are poorly rendered. Color is unhelpful. The student used materials inappropriately. The finished sculpture may be too large or too small. Craftsmanship is variable.

Level Four -- The finished sculpture does not effectively express an ideal form in three dimensions. Details are poorly rendered. Color is unhelpful. The student used materials inappropriately. The finished sculpture may be too large or too small. Craftsmanship is poor.

<u>Extension:</u> This project can be adapted to small groups, who can brainstorm together and work on fewer larger sculptures. The theme may also be extended to any other

group: teachers and administrators, parents, celebrities, political groups, etc.

<u>Resources:</u>

www.louvre.fr/louvrea.htm

www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

http://www.ancient-greece.org/images/museums/acropolis- mus/index.htm

http://www.metmuseum.org/home.asp

http://mv.vatican.va/3_EN/pages/MV_Home.html

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www.sargentart.com   09/04/07